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Three US Churches Speak on Racial Problem

(New York) - Three denominations in the United States have made statements during the last two weeks on the country's race problem.

In Dayton, Ohio, the United Lutheran Church in America reaffirmed its determination to demonstrate "the possibility of integration" in a resolution adopted at the church's twenty-first biennial convention.

The resolution said that the church "is sensitive to the present challenge and opportunities in the realm of human relations and is conscious of its responsibility to provide leadership in this realm".

At the same time, the convention reminded church members of a statement made at its 1956 convention. At that time the denomination said that Christians have special responsibilities to keep open channels of communication and understanding among different groups in the integration controversy.

The Evangelical United Brethren Church has prohibited the use of denominational facilities as public or private classrooms to avoid school integration. In a resolution passed by the 450 delegates to the thirty-ninth quadrennial General Conference in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, the church said it was "unalterably opposed to all practices of racial segregation. "We withhold permission to

use our church buildings as segregated schools in an effort to disobey the mandate of the Supreme Court," the resolution said. About 120 of the denomination's churches are in the Southern states of Virginia, Tennessee, Kentucky and Florida.

The executive committee of the Southern Baptist Convention's Christian Life Commission has issued a statement in Nashville, Tennessee, denouncing acts of violence against minority groups. It said that the "inflammatory statements and defiant acts of certain elected public officials have encouraged disrespect for constitutional government and law and fostered a spirit of rebellion and lawlessness". The commission urged all citizens "to oppose actively lawless acts, such as bombings, beatings and abuse of persons because of race, religion or conviction".

Meanwhile, Dr. Robert E. Van Deusen of the Washington office of the National Lutheran Council, has criticized the church for falling "far short of practising what it preaches. "If the church is to be heard and respected in the turmoil over school integration it must first of all prove that it means what it says," he said, speaking to a thousand delegates attending the ninety-sixth annual Sunday school convention of the Pennsylvania State Sabbath School Association, meeting in Greensburg. He told delegates that interracial churches and Sunday schools were the exception rather than the rule in Pennsylvania, as in the South. EPS, Geneva

Southern Pastors Favour School Integration

(New York) - A survey conducted by "Pulpit Digest", a non-denominational journal for ministers, shows that a majority of Protestant ministers in the seventeen Southern states in the United States favour compliance with the Supreme Court's order for racial integration in public schools.

Out of the 765 ministers who answered the questionnaire, four out of five expressed an opinion favouring integration. Those who opposed suggested finding possible legal ways of avoiding the Court's decision. Three per cent said they favoured open disobedience.

Representing a cross-section of ministers in the South in 27 denominations, half said they considered racial integration in the public schools inevitable. Only seven per cent replied that it "can never be successful in the South".

In Kentucky, North Carolina and Washington, D.C., more than 80 per cent of the pastors polled favoured integration. In Arkansas and Mississippi the figure was 54 per cent, in Alabama, 53 per cent and in South Carolina, 50 per cent.

EPS, Geneva

LWF to Hold Next Assembly in Finland in 1963

(Strasbourg) - The next General Assembly of the Lutheran World Federation will be held during the summer of 1963 in Helsinki, Finland, according to action taken by the LWF's Executive Committee, meeting in Strasbourg, France, on October 27 to 30.

Originally the assembly had been planned for the summer of 1962. The change was made because the next Assembly of the World Council of Churches is set for Christmas, 1961, in Ceylon and "it seems unwise to have a world assembly in the Orient in 1961-62 and eight months later to have a world assembly of the LWF in northern Europe", LWF officers said.

In other action, the committee agreed that the Lutheran World Federation offices should be in the new headquarters building of the World Council of Churches in Geneva, scheduled for completion in 1961, and said it would channel contributions from Lutheran churches for the building fund.

Establishment in Africa of a 50,000-watt radio station was authorised by the committee. Also planned are one or more less powerful transmitters for local broadcasts. The African country has not been selected yet, and "will depend on where a franchise can be negotiated" with a government but plans call for a place "chosen as to make possible the widest possible coverage not only of the African continent, but also of the Near East and Asia". Estimated cost is \$400,000 to set up the station and an annual budget of \$70,000.

In other action, the committee authorised the federation's Commission on Inner Missions to arrange a second World Lutheran Conference on Social Responsibility in connection with the Assembly in Finland. The main theme for the conference has been tentatively set as "Our Saving and Serving Faith".

During the meeting, Lutherans in all countries were urged to help solve the problems of the modern world and not be content to live "in the shadow of great reformers", in a speech by Dr. Franklin Clark Fry, president of the LWF and also chairman of the Central Committee of the World Council of Churches. Dr. Fry told the committee that he regretted the absence of Hungarian Lutheran Bishop Lajos Ordass. First vice-president of the LWF, Bishop Ordass was unable to get permission to leave his country.

Dr. Fry and Dr. Carl Lund-Quist, LWF executive secretary, reported that discussions with the Missouri Synod about joining the federation have taken place since last summer's world assembly in Minneapolis. Results have not been encouraging, they said, but the committee voted to continue negotiations "seeking a more hopeful basis for further conferences".

A report to the committee said that an All-Africa Theological Seminar would be started next February at Marangu, Tanganyika. The seminar will give advanced theological courses for students from every part of Africa and will be sponsored by member churches of the Federation.

The rite of confirmation will be the topic of a major study by the LWF's Commission on Education, it was reported during the sessions. First phase of the study will be a series of regional conferences in different countries arranged by national committees of the Federation. The first was held on October 12 to 22 in Hofgeismar, Germany, and was attended by participants from both East and West Germany.

EPS, Geneva

Church of Greece Holding Assembly of the Hierarchy

(Athens) - Sixty bishops of the Church of Greece are attending the thirteenth assembly of the Hierarchy in Athens during the month of November, the second assembly to be held since the end of World War II.

During the meeting, the bishops are holding plenary sessions on Monday, Wednesday and Friday each week and working in subcommittees during the rest of the week. Subjects being discussed include the constitution of the Church of Greece; education, salary and the right to vote of clergy; parish organization; preaching, sacramental life, confession, armed forces chaplaincy and Sunday schools; reorganization of monastic life; marriage, divorce, interfaith marriages and illegitimacy; religious education in state schools; relations with Orthodox and heterodox churches; governing of church institutions and religious propaganda by Roman Catholics, Protestants and Jehovah's Witnesses in Greece.

EPS, Geneva

Finnish Lutherans Postpone Decision on Ordination of Women

(Helsinki) - The decision on whether or not to ordain women as ministers in the Lutheran Church of Finland has been postponed until at least 1963.

Delegates to the church's assembly, meeting last month in Helsinki, voted 75 to 45 to refer the question to the next assembly in 1963. Meanwhile, the ordination proposal will go to a special committee for study.

Under the proposal qualified women would be ordained by bishops as "curates" or "vice pastors" and would be permitted to take part in all normal pastoral duties except administering the sacraments. However, in special cases, women would be allowed to give Communion to persons in hospitals and prisons who cannot attend regular services.

Nearly a third of all Lutheran theological students in Finland are women.

EPS, Geneva

An Ecumenical Institute in the US

(Evanston, Illinois) - Officials of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA and the World Council of Churches were among those attending the installation in October of Dr. Walter W. Leibrecht, former professor at Harvard Divinity School, as the first director of the Evanston Institute for Ecumenical Studies.

Set up last year, the centre, first of its kind in the United States, will train leaders in the ecumenical movement and serve as a centre for research and study in ecumenical concerns. The year's programme will include conferences on such topics as: "The Church's Responsibility in the Middle East Conflict", "Religion and Ethics in Business Decisions", "The Christian Faith and Human Rights" and "The Source and Power of Healing".

Principal speakers at the installation ceremony were Dr. Roswell P. Barnes, executive secretary of the World Council of Churches in the USA, and Dr. H. Ralph Higgins, rector of St. Mark's Episcopal church, Evanston, and president of the institute.

EPS, Geneva

New Trends in Buddhism

A paper published by a Scandinavian Buddhist mission has stated that Buddhism is adapting itself more to Christianity.

Because Buddhism recognises no absolute truth, the publication says, it is not difficult to assimilate elements of the Christian faith and points out that sometimes sermons by Buddhist priests can scarcely be distinguished from those given by Christians.

Buddhists have taken over Christian hymns and now sing "Buddha Is Love" and "What a Friend Is Our Buddha". In Japan a Buddhist priest is reported to have closed a service with the words, "Amen, in Jesus' Name", while other priests are said to speak of "Jesus Buddha", according to the paper.

EPS, Geneva

In Brief

A short history of the ecumenical movement, written by Pastor Paul Conord, general secretary of the Reformed Church of France, has just been published in French. It describes the movement which led to the formation of the World Council of Churches in 1948 and tells of the council's present work. The book is included in the series "Les Bergers et les Mages" and contains a preface written by Dr. W.A. Visser 't Hooft, general secretary of the WCC.

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The Thomana Choir of Leipzig, conducted by Kurt Thomas, has been invited to go to the United Kingdom for a concert tour in the autumn of 1959. In the spring of 1959 the choir plans to tour Western Germany.

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Reports from Rumania say that 235 priests and monks of the Rumanian Orthodox Church have been arrested during the past few months. In addition, many Jews have lost their jobs or been imprisoned. No word has been received concerning the reaction of the headquarters of the Orthodox Church in Bucharest.

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Three conferences on economic life are being held this week in India, sponsored by the National Christian Council. The conferences, scheduled for North India, Central India and South India, are considering the theme, "Building up the Total Life of Village Churches". Discussions include the use of land, village industries and marketing.

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Noon-hour services are being held in the Wilhelmina Church at The Hague, Holland, every other Thursday, for civil servants working in government offices. More than 250 persons attended the first service, arranged by the government workers themselves.

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The Free Methodist Church of North America, with 55,000 members, has approved merger with the 1,000-member Holiness Movement Church in Canada. The merger had earlier been endorsed by the Holiness Church. The Holiness group conducts work in Hong Kong, Brazil, Ireland and Egypt and reports that churches in Egypt have several thousand members. Organized in 1860, the Free Methodist Church has more than 1,200 churches.

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Mrs. William Sale Terrell of West Hartford, Conn., has been unanimously elected president of United Church Women, succeeding Mrs. Theodore O. Wedel of Washington, D.C. UCW is made up of 2,200 local and state councils of church women and represents between 12 to 15 million Protestant and Eastern Orthodox women in the United States.

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Dr. Madeleine Barot, executive secretary of the Department of Coöperation of Men and Women in Church and Society of the World Council of Churches, is the first woman to speak in the Cathedral of Lausanne, Switzerland. On October 30 she addressed 5,000 Protestant women from the canton of Vaud on the role of lay women in the church. Because of an overflow crowd, a second service was held in the Church of St. François.

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In a radio and television speech on Reformation Day, October 31, transmitted throughout Western Germany and West Berlin, Dr. Reinhold von Thadden-Trieglaff made the official announcement of the theme for the 1951 Kirchentag - "Ye Shall Be My People". He stressed the fact that the theme does not refer to "the German people, with its hopes and disappointments, its loss of political unity and its longing for reunion, it refers to God Himself". The Kirchentag will be held on August 12 to 16 in Munich.

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More than \$25,000 was raised through the Federation of French Protestant Churches for relief to the flood-damaged areas of southern France. A two-week work camp, sponsored by CIMADE, Protestant relief organization in France, has just ended. A twelve-member team cleaned apartments, made emergency deliveries of clothing and furniture and cleaned silt from farm homes and buildings. One team member is staying in the area for three months to use a bulldozer supplied by the World Council of Churches' Division of Inter-Church Aid and Service to Refugees for a similar emergency two years ago. EPS, Geneva